

A NEW MYRMECOPHILOUS BEETLE.

By J. CLARK.

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FAMILY PTINIDAE.

ENASIBA MIROCERA *n. sp.*

Dingy castaneous-brown, elytra somewhat darker.

Head.—About as long as greatest width, truncated in front, sides evenly narrowed to base but eyes suddenly projecting; a deep semicircular, transverse impression between the eyes, and a feeble one in front; numerous pale, short, stiff setæ each arising from a puncture. Antennæ 10-jointed; first longer than broad, and curved; second half the length of the first, triangular, its apex closely applied to base of third; third not as long as the first, its apex produced; fourth and fifth bases truncated; sixth, seventh, and eighth subequal, slightly tapering to, and truncated at apex; ninth, similar, but rounded at apex; tenth, sides slightly rounded and dilated to apex, apex truncated.

Prothorax.—Longer than wide, widest at base, greatly constricted at basal third, strongly and irregularly striolate, the sides well rounded to basal constriction, a well-defined median line with two tufts of yellow hairs at basal end, and a shorter impression at each side also terminating with a tuft of yellow hair; clothed with thick setæ.

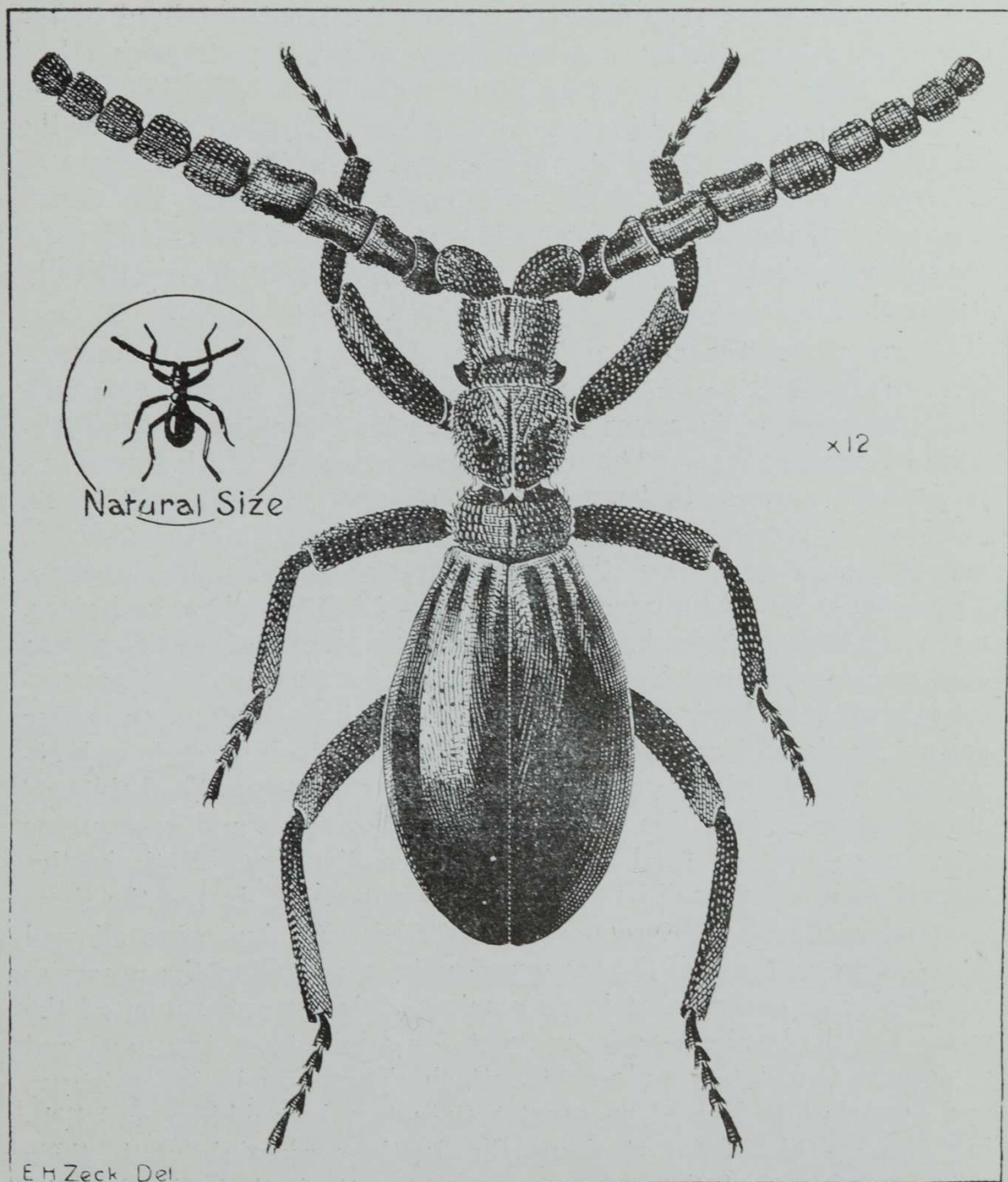
Elytra.—Strongly convex, elongate ovate, rather finely punctate striate, the interstices densely and finely longitudinally strigose, three large and deep basal impressions on each elytron, ridges between the basal impressions with setæ as on head and prothorax, setæ on disc very short but becoming longer on the apical slope.

Legs.—Densely covered with punctures and clothed with scales; femora and tibia grooved.

Underside.—Finely punctured, clothed with a few scattered scales.

Length.—3.5 to 4 mm.

Habitat.—Western Australia; Bunbury, Busselton. Found in nests of *Iridomyrmex conifer* Forel. (J. Clark).



E. Mirocera.

In general appearance close to *E. tristis* Oll. but may at once be distinguished by the antennæ. In the new species, these have been described from above, but, from the side, they appear very different. Viewed therefrom, the second joint appears equal in length to the first, and one-third longer than the third; at the base, the external edge is greatly produced towards the head; third joint slightly produced at apex, base closely applied to apex of the second; fourth slightly longer than the first, base rounded; fifth base same width as the third and fourth, but greatly reduced at

apex; sixth to ninth elliptical, greatly reduced at base and apex; tenth strongly and obliquely dilated to apex. From every direction the apical joint of *E. tristis* is seen to be smaller. Viewed from the side, the heads are very different. From the front, the head of the new species appears to have two shiny ridges close to each other, with another thinner ridge in front. From the side, the middle of the head appears to have an obtuse ridge. The impressions at the bases of the elytra of the new species are larger than in the case of *E. tristis*, and the interstitial striation is considerably less dense. The setæ on the head, prothorax and elytra are stronger and more conspicuous, but the fascicles on the prothorax are practically identical.

The genus was erected by Olliff in 1886 (Trans. Linn. Soc. N.S. Wales, 1886, p. 839) on a single specimen of *E. tristis*, and, in his description, he seems to have regarded the antennæ as eleven-jointed, for he says:—"The unique specimen upon which this genus is founded appears to have lost the terminal joint of each of its antennæ." The antennæ, however, prove to be ten-jointed. Olliff's description is good when the specimen is seen from one direction. The type of *E. tristis* remained unique until 1918, when, and since, many specimens have been obtained from nests of *Iridomyrmex conifer* in and around Perth. Specimens of *E. tristis* and *E. microcera* have been kept in an observation nest containing an active colony of the host ant (*I. conifer*) but, owing to interrupted observations, little information has been gained concerning the habits of either species. Both kept constantly on the move and were never seen to partake of food or water during the day. Both beetles seemed to be on friendly terms with the ants, and, during the three months' confinement, were never interfered with, but were allowed to move freely through the various chambers, including the nurseries which always contained a large number of larvæ and pupæ of the ants. On the beetles remaining quiet for a minute or two, one, and sometimes two ants were seen to attach themselves to the antennæ, and appeared to be getting great satisfaction by nibbling and licking the apical joints, stroking the beetle meanwhile with their antennæ. None of the ants were seen to attach themselves to the fascicles on the prothorax.

I am indebted to Mr. E. H. Zeck, of Sydney, for the accompanying plate, which he has drawn from a co-type.
